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AUTHOR Ensign, Arselia, Ed.
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ABSTRACT

This checklist is intended to help churches evaluate the accessibility of their facilities to those with physical disabilities. Categories covered are: basic accessibility, parking lots, walks, ramps, entrances/exits, doors and doorways, stairs and steps, floors, worship space, rest rooms, controls, water fountains, identification, warning signals, hazards, public telephones, and elevators. An accessibility process is detailed for the three major steps of: (1) audit (e.g., identify the needs); (2) design (e.g., develop a scope of the work and prioritize needs); and (3) implementation (e.g., finalize financial planning, implement, and dedicate the resulting church and program. (DB)

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PAM REPEATER

HOUSES OF WORSHIP
Physical Accessibility Checklist

No. 70

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Arselia Ensign, Editor

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PAM Assistance Centre
601 West Maple Street
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517-371-5897 or
1-800-274-7426
Voice or TDD
FAX 517-371-5898

IS YOUR CHURCH ACCESSIBLE?

ACCESSIBLE?

--Catholic Update July 1986

It is truly a joy to discover that many denominations are taking an active interest in making their houses of worship more accessible to persons with disabilities. Accessibility is much more than physical access and accommodation, the topic we are addressing here. Of equal importance is the open heart and mind, the willingness to adapt or relocate church activities and resources. But first, one must enter!

As your REPEATER Editor addresses this topic for the first time, I wish to acknowledge some fine sources of materials, among which are the Episcopal Resource Packet on Disabilities, the Health and Welfare Ministries of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, The National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities, The AFB News (July, 1989) concerning Synagogues, the Mennonite Board of Missions, and the Lutheran Church of America, Division of Parish Services.

It is from the latter source that we chose the following Church Access Checklist for review by the Michigan Center for a Barrier Free Environment. It was our wish to provide our readers with a checklist which conformed with State of Michigan, Department of Labor, guidelines. The Lutheran Church Checklist, provided here, has therefore been reviewed and certain requirements modified for churches in this state.

Arselia Ensign

CHURCH ACCESS CHECKLIST

Can someone who is physically limited get into your church building and participate in worship and other congregational activities? Below is a list of questions that will help identify the architectural barriers that are present in your building. The questions marked with asterisks (*) identify the access requirements that are of greatest importance in making your building essentially accessible.

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A. Basic Accessibility Yes No

* 1. Is it possible to get from a parked car to any area in the building without going up or down a step or steps? ____ ____

Comments: _____

B. Parking Lots Yes No

* 1. Are accessible spaces close to the building? ____ ____
   a) Is there a minimum of two spaces always available? ____ ____
   b) Are they identified as reserved for use by individuals with physical disabilities? ____ ____
   c) Are the parking spaces at least 8' wide with an access aisle at least 5' wide? The access aisle can be between the parking spaces. ____ ____
   d) Is the access aisle paved, even if the rest of the parking lot is not paved? ____ ____

Comments: _____

C. Walks Yes No

1. Do walks have nonslip, paved surfaces? ____ ____
2. Are walks at least 60" wide? ____ ____
* 3. Is the slope of walks not greater than 5 %? ____ ____
* 4. Are walks of a continuing common surface, and not interrupted by steps? ____ ____
5. Whenever they cross other walks, driveways or parking lots, do walks blend to a common level? ____ ____
* 6. Do walks have a level platform at the top which is
   (a) 6' x 5' if a door swings out onto the platform or toward the walk, or ____ ____
   (b) 3' x 5' if door doesn't swing onto the platform? ____ ____
* 7. Does the platform extend at least 3' beyond latch-sides of the doorway? ____ ____

Comments: _____

D. Ramps Yes No

* 1. Do ramps have a slope no greater than 1 foot rise in 12 feet and a width of no less than 60" on exterior? ____ ____
* 2. Do ramps have handrails on both sides? ____ ____
   a) Are handrails 34"-38" above the surface of the ramp? ____ ____
   b) Are handrail surfaces smooth? ____ ____
   c) Do handrails extend 1 foot beyond the top and bottom of the ramp? ____ ____
3. Do ramps have a surface that is nonslip? ____ ____
4. Do ramps have at least 5 feet of straight clearance at the top and 72" at the bottom? ____ ____
5. Do ramps have level platforms at 30 foot intervals and whene ver they turn for purposes of rest and safety? ____ ____

Comments: _____

E. Entrance/Exits Yes No

* 1. Is at least one primary entrance to each building usable by individuals in wheelchairs? (It is preferable that all or most entrances (and exits) should be accessible to, and usable by, individuals in wheelchairs or per sons who are otherwise disabled.) ____ ____

Comments: _____

F. Doors and Doorways Yes No

* 1. Do doors have a clear opening of 32" or more? ____ ____
   a) Are they operable by a single effort? Note: Double doors are not usable by those with disabilities unless they operate by single effort, or unless one of the two doors meets the 32" width. ____ ____
2. Are the doors operable with pressure (30 lbs. or less) which could reasonably be expected from disabled persons? ____ ____
* 3. Is the floor on the inside and outside of each doorway level for a distance of 5 feet from the door in the direction the door swings? ____ ____
* 4. Are sharp inclines and abrupt changes in level avoided at doorsills? (1/2" for interior doors, 3/4" for exterior doors.) ____ ____

Comments: _____

G. Stairs and Steps Yes No

1. Do steps avoid abrupt nosing? ____ ____
2. Do stairs have handrails both sides 34" to 36" high as measured from the tread at the face of the riser? ____ ____
   a) Is there at least one handrail that extends beyond the top and bottom wall? ____ ____
   b) Is the handrail at least 1 1/2" from the wall? ____ ____
3. Do steps have risers 7" or less? ____ ____
4. Are uneven or slippery surfaces avoided on the step treads? ____ ____
5. Are open stairs provided with a means of warning unsighted persons of their existence, such as slightly raised abrasive strips at the approach? ____ ____

Comments: _____

H. Floors Yes No

1. Do floors have a nonslip surface? ____ ____
* 2. Are floors on each story at a common level or connected by a ramp? ____ ____
3. Where carpeting is used, is it a tight weave and low pile, preferably without padding? ____ ____

Comment: _____

I. Worship Space Yes No

* 1. Can people participate fully in worship? ____ ____
   a) Can people hear? ____ ____
      Is there adequate amplification of sound? e.g., induction loop systems and miniature broadcasting systems which can be adapted to existing sound systems? ____ ____
   b) Can people see? Is there adequate lighting to enable participation in worship? Locate light sources so there are no shadows on speakers or interpreters. ____ ____
   c) Is space provided for wheelchairs (minimum of two spaces)? ____ ____
   d) Do at least two or more spaces have extra leg room for handicapped persons with crutches, walkers, braces or casts? ____ ____
   e) Can people recerive the sacrament of the alter with others without climbing steps? ____ ____

Comments: _____

J. Rest Rooms Yes No

* 1. Is there at least one accessible toilet room provided on each floor? ____ ____
* 2. Do entrance vestibules, doors and vision screens allow sufficient clear ance for wheelchair passage? ____ ____
   3. Is the floor of the restroom of a nonslip surface and the same level as the corridor floor outside? ____ ____
* 4. Do toilet rooms have turning space 5 feet by 5 feet to allow traffic of individuals in wheelchairs? ____ ____
* 5. Is there at least one toilet stall that :
   a) is at least 36" wide (42" preferred)? ____ ____
   b) has a 48" clear depth from door closing to front of commode to allow a wheelchair in the stall? ____ ____
   c) has a door that is 36" wide and swings out? ____ ____
   d) has grab bars on each side, which meet specifications, fastened securely to the wall at the ends and center? ____ ____
   e) has commode with seat 19" from the floor? ____ ____
   6. Do toilet rooms have sinks that are wall-mounted to provide 29" clear ance from floor to bottom of the fixture? ____ ____
   7. Do sinks have easy-operating faucets (not self-closing)? (Single-lever type handles not requiring hand grip are preferred.) ____ ____
   8. Are drain pipes and hot water pipes covered or insulated? ____ ____
   9. Are some mirrors and shelves at a height as low as possible with the bottom no higher than 40" above the floor? ____ ____
   10. Do toilet rooms have towel racks, towel dispensers, other dispensers and disposal units mounted no higher than 38" from the floor? ____ ____
   11. Do toilet rooms for men have wall-mounted urinals with the opening of the basin 17" from the floor, or have floor-mounted urinals that are level with the main floor of the toilet room? ____ ____

Comments: _____

K. Controls Yes No

1. Are switches and controls for light, heat, ventilation, windows, draperies, fire alarms, and all similar controls of frequent or essential use, placed no higher than 48" from floor? ____ ____

Comments: _____

L. Water Fountains Yes No

* 1. Is there at least one water fountain usable by physically handicapped persons provided at an accessible location on each floor? ____ ____
2. Do water fountains or coolers have upfront spouts and controls? ____ ____
3. Are they hand-operated (without the need for grasping, pinching or twist ing) or hand and foot operated? ____ ____
4. If coolers are wall-mounted, are they hand-operated, with basin 34" from the floor? ____ ____
* a) If over 36" from floor is there a cup dispenser next to the unit? ____ ____
5. If there are floor-mounted fountains, are spouts no higher than 30"? ____ ____

Comments: _____

M. Identification Yes No

1. Are raised (or recessed) letters or numbers used to identify rooms or offices? ____ ____
2. Is identification placed on the wall, on the handle side of the door? ____ ____
3. Are doors not intended for normal use, that might prove dangerous if a blind person were to exit or enter by them, made quickly identifiable to the touch by knurling the door handle or knob? ____ ____

Comments: _____

N. Warning Signals Yes No

1. Are audible warning signals accompanied by simultaneous visual signals for the benefit of those with hearing or sight disabilities? ____ ____

Comments: _____

O. Hazards Yes No

1. Are door closers sufficiently out of the way to avoid injury and accidents? ____ ____
2. Are signs, ceiling lights, fixtures or similar objects protruding into regular corridors or traffic ways at least 7 feet above the floor? ____ ____

3. Is lighting on ramps adequate? ____ ____
4. Are exit signs easily identifiable to all disabled persons? ____ ____

Comments: _____

P. Public Telephones **Yes No**

* 1. Is there easy access to a telephone? ____ ____
2. Is there an appropriate number of public telephones accessible to physically handicapped persons? (Standard telephone boots are not acces sible.) ____ ____
3. Is height of dial (side approach) 54" or less from floor, 48" at the front.? (Push-button dialing preferred.) ____ ____
4. Is coin slot located 54" or less from the floor? ____ ____
5. Are there telephones equipped with an amplifier for persons with hearing disabilities? ____ ____
   a) are they identified as such? ____ ____

Comments: _____

Q. Elevators **Yes No**

* 1. If your church is multistory, does it have an elevator? ____ ____
2. Are elevators usable by the physically handicapped provided? ____ ____
3. Are elevators located close to an accessible building entry? ____ ____
4. Are all of the controls 54" or less from floor? ____ ____
5. Are the buttons labeled with raised (or indented) letters beside them? ____ ____
6. Is there a handrail provided on at least one side 32" from floor:? ____ ____
* 7. Is the cab at least 68" x 55"? ____ ____
* 8. Does the door have a clear opening at least 36" wide? ____ ____
9. Is an emergency telephone located low enough for children and the handicapped (48" maximum height)? ____ ____
10. Is the elevator self-leveling (1/2" maximum), slow-closing with sensing devices? ____ ____

Comments: _____

Church Access Check List

Reviewed by

_____

_____

_____

Date(s)

_____

_____

Name of Church

_____

We gratefully acknowledge the fact that all production costs of this special issue of the PAM REPEATER have been provided by the Rotary Club of Lansing and Dart National Bank.

LOVE FINDS A WAY

--Al Bonsignore
The Christian Overcomers, Inc.

ACCESSIBILITY PROCESS

Step 1 **AUDIT**

a. Initiate an "Audit for Accessibility" of your church.
b. Develop a statement of need.
c. Present the needs to the Church Board.
d. Recommend the formation of an Access Audit Team to study the feasibility of remodeling to make the church accessible.
e. Suggest the formation of a Attitudinal/Programmatic Team to look at the programmatic considerations and attitudinal barriers which exist in the congregation.
f. Inform the congregation of the objectives of the Access Audit Team and Additudinal/ Programmatic Team, as directed by the Board. Assure them that they will be continually updated throughout the process, and tell them how information will be shared.

Step 2 **DESIGN**

a. The Access Audit team must work cooperatively with the Church Board and a building committee. Consult with experts for their recommendations of effectiveness and cost efficiency.
b. The Attitudinal/Programmatic Team must work cooperatively with the Church Board and other appropriate committees, (e.g., Education, Social Concerns).
c. Develop a scope of the work. Narrow and prioritize needs.
d. Estimate cost and develop a timeline.
e. Develop a financial plan to meet the cost.
f. Present the findings of both task forces to the Church Board requesting the necessary funding.

Step 3 **IMPLEMENTATION**

a. The Access Audit Team should develop a package in order to conceptualize prices and design.
b. The Attitudinal/Programmatic Team should plan awareness raising events, including persons with disabilities in all aspects of the planning and implementation.
c. Finalize financial planning.
d. Present final scope, actual costs and projected payment plan to Church Board.
f. Implement plans.
g. Dedicate final, accessible, church and program.

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THE ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

Q. Why should the church conduct an accessibility audit?

A. Every church can expect to have one out of four members of its congregation handicapped at some point in their life. As a result of handicapping conditions, some of these members will have to use a wheelchair, a crutch, a cane or other mobility aids such as a walker. Some members will suffer strokes or heart attacks or will have reduced vision or hearing as the result of serious accident or simply as a result of their age. Even pregnancy will temporarily handicap many members of the church each year.

To better serve all of its members, the church can use this audit to determine if physical barriers within the building are restricting or preventing persons with handicapping conditions from fully participating in its activities. The accessibility audit will help the church to find out where the physical barriers exist and to know what it can do to remove them.

Q. How should the accessibility audit team members be selected?

A. Regardless of the size of the church, audit team members should have one or more of the following qualifications:

1. They should have an interest in the project.

2. They should include persons with various handicapping conditions as well as persons who have some experience with elderly or handicapped persons. These experienced persons may be a parent of a handicapped child, may work for a social service agency, or may have some other first hand experience with handicapped or elderly persons.

3. They should have some experience with construction. (They may be a contractor, carpenter, architect, engineer, building department inspector or someone skilled at building repair.)

4. They should have some experience with fire and accident prevention (they may be a local volunteer firefighter or a building code inspector).

-HEALTH AND WELFARE MINISTRIES
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PAM ASSISTANCE CENTRE
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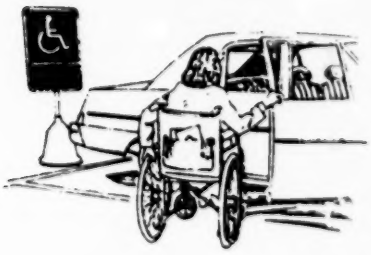

ACQUISITIONS SPECIALIST
ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE
1920 ASSOCIATION DR.
RESTON VA 22091